MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY
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61 An Enquiry into the

Present DUTY

OF A

Low-Church-Man,

Occasion'd by the late

ACT of Parliament.

IN A

LETTER

FROM

A Dissenter in the Country, to a *Low-Church-Man* in the City.

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VICTORIA PARK
MANCHESTER

The Second Edition.

But the more they Afflicted them, the more they Multiplied and Grew. And they were grieved because of the Children of Israel. *And the* Ægyptians *made the Children of* Israel *to Serve with Rigour*, Exod. 1. 12, 13.

Josephi Hallet Presb. & Doctissimi et Amicissimi LONDON: Auctoris.

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An Enquiry, &c.

SIR,

I Was very well ſatisfied with your free Converſation about the late Act, *for Confirming the Toleration granted to Proteſtant Diſſenters, and for Supplying the Defects thereof*, as we muſt now call it, becauſe our Senators have thought fit to give it that Title. I return you my hearty Thanks for the ſeveral Obſervations you then made, upon the Way in which it was obtain'd, the Circumſtances of the time when it was Enacted, and the Conſequences which may reaſonably be expected from it. Your Acquaintance with the firſt Springs of it, gave you Advantage for further Reflections, than we who live at a diſtance can preſently make. I am now fully convinc'd of the juſtneſs of your Sentiments, by obſerving the Steps, which have been taken ſince I ſaw you. It cannot but afford Matter of much Speculation, that ſuch a manifeſt Partiality ſhould be ſhewn, that while the *Scotch Diſſenters* are Courted and Careſt, who have been all along in Times paſt, declared Enemies to the Revolution, the preſent Government, and the Proteſtant Succeſſion, and Friends to the Pretender; the *Engliſh Diſſenters* on the other Hand, whoſe Character is ſo perfectly the Reverſe of the former, and have therefore always deſerv'd well of the Government, ſhould without any Offence given by them, be now render'd incapable of thoſe Advantages, which in Juſtice and Equity ought to be common to all good Subjects. You were pleas'd to ſay, theſe Things were to be parallel'd in no Proteſtant Government in the World; nor do's the little Acquaintance I have in the World enable me to produce any Inſtance, with which I may Contradict you. If none elſe have more Knowledge of Foreigners than you and I to furniſh out a Precedent, I think we muſt be content to let this paſs for one of thoſe *Originals*, of which the late Times have been ſo very Fruitful. The Diſſenters are much oblig'd to you for the

good Opinion you have of them, while their numerous Adverſaries bear ſo hard upon them. It Evidenc'd the nobleneſs of your Temper, to declare, the bitter and implacable Spirit, which has been lately ſo prevailing againſt them, inclin'd you to think Better of their Cauſe, and ſhould make you love them more than ever. I can't but often think of your comparing their Cauſe to that of our Lord, when *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, Enemies to one another, could ſo readily joyn as Friends in Condemning him. I hope it will be ſome allay to their Trouble, to think they are therein conform'd to their great Lord. When you had carried your Reflections ſo far, I Confeſs, I was expecting you ſhould have gone a little farther, and have compleated the Satisfaction of your entertaining Converſation. I was Surpriz'd you ſhould here ſtop ſhort; but more ſo, when upon my taking occaſſion to ſuggeſt my Opinion to you, I perceiv'd you did at leaſt heſitate about it. However according to your uſual Candour, you were pleas'd to deſire to ſee it fairly prov'd, and accordingly upon my return Home I ſet about it, and do now ſend you, what I hope will prove a full Evidence of the truth of the Aſſertion I advanced, which is this;

> *That according to the avowed Principles and Doctrines of very Famous Conforming Divines, You, and all honeſt Chriſtians, who deſire to continue in the Communion of the Catholick Church of Chriſt, are upon this late Act, bound to forſake the Eſtabliſh'd Communion.*

That I may confirm this my Aſſertion; 1. I will repreſent to you the Caſe of the Church of *England* ſince this Act, and make it appear, She does renounce Communion with ſome part of the Catholick Church.

2. I will lay before you the Principles and Doctrines of thoſe Divines, and ſhew you how expreſs they are in aſſerting, That no Perſon or Society can be in the Communion of the Catholick Church, if they renounce Communion with *any part* of the Catholick Church. From whence it will unqueſtionably follow, that the Church of *England*, according to theſe Men's Principles, cannot be in Communion with the Catholick Church, and conſequently all thoſe who

who deſire to continue in the communion of the Catholick Church, are bound to forſake the Communion of the Church of *England*.

You will perhaps be ready to ſay; I ſet out like a rigid Diſſenter, and am High-Church on our ſide, as well as ſome others are on the Epiſcopal ſide: But our long Acquaintance has, I doubt not, convinc'd you, my Temper is Moderate and Peaceable. You know how earneſtly deſirous I have been our Diviſions might be heal'd, and have not us'd to ſtand at the wideſt diſtance from the Conformiſts. And I aſſure you, Sir, my Temper is not alter'd, and the Change which has been made is more properly in other Things than in my ſelf, who ſhould be the ſame Perſon, could I have the ſame Views as formerly. I have plainly ſeen that all our Endeavours for ſome Years paſt after an Accommodation, have been Fruitleſs, that our charitable Compliances have been wretchedly miſconſtrued, and peeviſhly turn'd to our Reproach, and inſtead of doing Good have done Harm; inſtead of ſoftning our Adverſaries, according to our Expectations, have harden'd them, and been pretended Occaſions of expreſſing their implacable Animoſity: So that for ſome few Years paſt I have been ſatisfied, it were better for us to ſtand at a greater diſtance, than to give them Offence by offering at any approaches to them. But now upon this Act, if I miſtake not, Things are render'd much worſe than ever; the Separation is deſignedly made almoſt as wide as poſſible; And therefore if I or others ſpeak now more harſhly of the Church than formerly, all equal Judges ought to aſcribe it to the Church, as now more deſerving that Treatment, rather than to Us, as if we were leſs Charitable or Peaceable. For my own part, I cannot but now look upon the Things in Controverſy with far leſs Indifference than ever; and ſhall heartily rejoyce, if you, and ſuch as you are, whom your Neighbours have us'd to revile as *Presbyterians*; (as it has been the Honour of our Side to have honeſt Men generally reckon'd to belong to it;) I ſay, if you, who, I hope, are almoſt perſuaded to be, what they have given you out to be, may now by what I ſhall offer be determined *to be not only Almoſt, but altogether ſuch as we are*, not *excepting our Bonds*; I mean

our

our incapacity for Places, ſince upon this Act that cannot be ſeparated.

But that I may come to the Buſineſs I propos'd, I ſhall endeavour in the firſt place to evidence the eſtabliſh'd Church ſince this Act, renounces communion with a part of the Catholick Church. This I ſhall not argue from their renouncing communion with *Us*; for tho' it is eaſy to prove we are a part of the Catholick Church, yet ſince my Argument is (as they call it, *ad Hominem*) from the Conceſſions of our Adverſaries, I ſhall rather chuſe to inſiſt upon what they are more likely to grant, and has at length been granted even by an *Engliſh* Convocation. I will ſuppoſe therefore, the Churches of the *Dutch*, *French*, and other Foreigners, who do not uſe the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, to be ſome Parts of the Catholick Church; and if it appear that the Church of *England* renounces communion with them, it muſt appear that She renounces communion with ſome Parts of the Catholick Church. Now, that the Church of *England* renounces communion with them is evident from the late Act. For by this it is ſufficiently declar'd to be a Criminal and Offenſive Thing for the Members of the Church of *England* to hold communion with thoſe Churches, and a Penalty is laid upon all thoſe that do it, if they happen to have any Places of Profit or Truſt. If the Church of *England* do's not condemn the holding communion with theſe Churches, why is it look'd upon as Criminal for any of Her Members to be preſent at their Worſhip? Or why is a Penalty laid upon any of them, if they be? If it ſhould be objected, That the Penalty is not laid upon all Her Members in general, if they joyn with theſe Churches, but only upon ſuch as have Places; and therefore the Church may be underſtood to allow of ſome of their Members communicating with them. I Anſwer, By puniſhing this in any, She declares her Judgment that it is an Evil and a Sin in all her Members. For if it be a Sin in him that has a Place, it muſt be a Sin in him that has none, for ought I can learn from Scripture, Reaſon or Fathers. Beſides, I would have any Man, that thinks ſuch an Objection worth mentioning, reſolve me, whether the Church of *England* looks upon it unlawful for her Members

Members to hold communion with the Diſſenters, and whether She has not declar'd this by that Act. If She has, let him then ſhew me what difference the Act makes between the Communion of the Foreign Churches and of the Diſſenters. For the Members of the Church of *England*, who have not Places, are as much at their Liberty to joyn with us as with the Foreign Churches. There is an evident Reaſon why, tho' they condemn the thing as Evil, yet the Penalty do's not extend to all the Members of the Church, becauſe this would be utterly to deſtroy all the Poor Remains of the *Toleration-Act*. For She claims us all as her Members, and to require all her Members under a Penalty not to go to any other Worſhip than her own, would be a forbidding us our Worſhip. I take it therefore for certain, that the Church of *England* do's now condemn the holding communion with thoſe Churches as an Evil.

And withal, She Condemns it as a very great Evil, as is evident from the Puniſhment which She inflicts for it. It is to be ſuppos'd, that Governments inflict Puniſhments in proportion to the greatneſs of the Offences committed, according to the Maxim of the Poet.

——————————*Adſit*
Regula peccatis quæ pœnas irroget æquas.

So that a Man may be able to judge of the Heinouſneſs of any Crime by the Severity of the Puniſhment annex'd to it. Now, Sir, do but examine the Offence by this Rule, and you muſt acknowledge, it is look'd upon as a grievous one indeed. The Fine of Forty Pounds, the Loſs of whatever Place a Man happens to have of Profit or Truſt, and an incapacitating him for any ſuch for the future, are the Three Terrible Heads of this *Cerberus*. The Fine alone is very conſiderable, and if we ſhould judge of the Offence by that only, how do many other Sins (which formerly were reckon'd great ones) appear by the lightneſs of their ſeveral Puniſhments to be ſmall and inconſiderable, nay almoſt innocent Things in compariſon of it. For Inſtance, Fornication in old Time was look'd upon as a grievous Sin, and, as it happens, the Liturgy accounts it a *deadly* Sin, when it

it ſays: *From Fornication and all other deadly Sin*, &c. And yet any Man that compares the Penalty of that with the Penalty of the other, would be ready to think it *venial* in compariſon of this terrible deadly one. And yet 'tis evident, this is the moſt inconſiderable part of the Penalty; the Loſs of a Man's Place may be vaſtly more. For this may be ſuppos'd to be the only Subſiſtence he has for Himſelf and Family, ſo that it may be a taking away his Livelyhood, and a turning him out to ſtarve in the wide World; The Unreaſonableneſs and Injuſtice of which may be greatly aggravated by his having perhaps laid out his All to procure this Means of his Subſiſtence, and by his not being conſider'd for his prime Coſt when he is turn'd out. Beſides the Place may happen to be very Great, ſo that the Penalty may be increas'd by this Means from Forty to ſeveral Thouſand Pounds. There are not many Offences which touch not a Man's Life, which have a ſeverer Puniſhment annex'd to them than this, if we conſider it only in theſe two Parts. And yet I judge the other part to be in ſome Reſpects heavier than both the former. For the incapacitating him for any Place of Profit or Truſt, is in effect ſetting a Brand upon him as utterly unfit to have any Confidence plac'd in him; which cannot but be more grievous to an Ingenuous Mind and a Good Subject, than the Loſs of his Eſtate. For a Man's Reputation is moſt valuable next to his Life, and is ſometimes it may be to be preferr'd to it. In fine, 'tis a little peculiar in this grievous Sin of holding Communion with theſe Foreign Churches, that nothing leſs than a Years Repentance can make Atonement for it, ſo far as that a Man may be abſolv'd from the Incapacity he was once condemn'd to. Upon the Whole, the Penalty is ſo ſevere, as that the thing itſelf is plainly condemn'd as one of the worſt of Crimes.

One would have expected, that if ſuch Penalties were laid upon *Engliſh-men* for holding communion with thoſe Churches, that yet an Exception ſhould have been made for thoſe Foreigners who have been thought worthy of Places, eſpecially conſidering ſome of them are Exiles upon a Religious Account; one would have been willing to ſuppoſe, their frequenting the Communion they were

were brought up in, ſhould not have been condemn'd for ſuch a grievous Sin: But you obſerve, Sir, no Exception could be allow'd; Diſſenters and Foreigners are made Brethren, as in their Cauſe, ſo in their Afflictions. Now, I do not find our Church-men care to deny theſe to be true Churches; nor did they uſe formerly, (many of them at leaſt) to deny the Lawfulneſs of holding communion with them. Dr. *Sherlock* ſpeaking of this, ſays; "But "however, *we may lawfully communicate with* "*the French CHURCH that is among us*, as "occaſion ſerves. Yes, no doubt we may, "becauſe they are in communion with us.—— "We have only the Church of *England* in "*England*. The *French* Church is in *France*, and the "*Dutch* Church is in *Holland*, tho' there is a *French* and "*Dutch* Congregation allow'd in *London*. Theſe Con-"gregations belong to their own Original Churches, "and are under their Government and Cenſures; but "there is no Church Power and Authority in *England* but "only of the Church of *England*, and therefore, tho' *we* "*may occaſionally communicate with the French Congregation*, "our obligation to conſtant communion is with the "Church of *England*, &c." Here you ſee, the Dr. allows the *French* and *Dutch* among us to be True Churches, or Congregations of their reſpective Foreign Churches; and that we may lawfully communicate with them. And indeed by doing ſo, we communicate with thoſe Original Churches to which theſe Congregations belong. Now, if this was lawful then, what has made it unlawful ſince? What great Offence have theſe Churches lately committed, that no communion is now to be held with them? But farther, as by allowing Communion with theſe Congregations, we allow communion with their Original Churches; ſo by renouncing communion with theſe Congregations, we renounce communion with their Original Churches, and ſo with ſome parts of the Catholick Church. Nay, I am bold to ſay, there is not any Church upon the Earth, with which the Church of *England* has not by this Act, vertually renounc'd communion, their Eccleſiaſtical Colonies in *Ireland* and *Scotland* only excepted. No

A. Letter to *Anon.* p. 15.

Ibid. p. 19.

where elſe thro' the whole World are any Chriſtians to be found, who worſhip God with the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, no not in Mr. *Oſterwald*'s Church at *Neufchattel*. And yet the Act makes it Criminal for Perſons in Places of Profit or Truſt, *knowingly or willingly to reſort to, or be preſent at* any ſuch Aſſembly in *England*. So that ſuppoſing any of theſe ſhould happen to be tranſlated into our Land, and be allow'd the ſame Liberty the *Dutch* and *French* now enjoy by this Act, all communion with them is forbidden. Upon the whole then, if the Church of *England* pretends to hold communion with the Catholick Church, it muſt be upon the like pretence with the Church of *Rome*, which is not content to be reckon'd a Part of the Catholick Church, but, according to her great Modeſty, claims the Honour of being the Whole of it.

I hope Sir, I have now fully acquitted my ſelf of one part of my Task, and made it out, that the Church of *England* renounces communion with ſome part of the Catholick Church, *viz.* The *Dutch* and *French* Churches. I have the rather inſiſted upon theſe, becauſe a Petition was offer'd to our Senators on behalf of them, which they would not ſuffer to be brought up. But tho' I have chiefly inſiſted upon them, you ſee my Argument proves, the Church do's vertually renounce communion with all the Parts of the Catholick Church. And if that did not appear in this Part, it would however be prov'd from their own Principles in the next; to which I now proceed, *viz.*.

2. To ſhew that according to their own Principles, if the Learnedſt of their Doctors underſtood them, they themſelves are by this means excluded from the communion of the Catholick Church: And here I have little more to do, than to ſet down the expreſs Words of ſome of their Famous Writers, which are too plain to need much commenting upon them. I might here produce many, but ſhall content my ſelf with a few, chuſing ſuch as the Clergy us'd to Copy after; and I doubt not thoſe Paſſages I ſhall mention will rub up your Memory, and bring

bring to your Mind a great many more of the like Nature, which you have met with in the Writings of the Clergy, or heard from the Pulpit. In the firſt place then let us hear Dr. *Sherlock*, who you know had ſtudied the Point of *Church-Communion*, and whoſe *Caſe* about it has been receiv'd with ſo much Applauſe by the Church of *England*, that his Opinion upon this Head, may be almoſt look'd upon as the receiv'd Opinion of the Church.

Thus then he Animadverts upon Mr. *Baxter*, " He ſuppoſes that Men may Separate from " particular Churches, without ſeparating from " the Catholick Church. *It is one thing to ſepa-* " *rate from the Univerſal Church, and another from Particular* " *Churches, or a few only.* Plea for Peace, *p.* 38. Now this " is true, if thoſe particular Churches be Schiſmatical, " *i. e.* are not in communion with the Catholick Church, " for it is no Schiſm to ſeparate from Schiſmaticks: But " if thoſe particular Churches are Members of the Ca- " tholick Church by a Catholick communion, *to ſeparate* " *from ſuch a particular Catholick Church, is to ſeparate* " *from the Univerſal Catholick Church; to divide from any* " *part of the Catholick Church breaks Catholick communion*, " and according to the ancient Diſcipline, thoſe who Schiſ- " matically divided from one Church, were accounted Schiſ- " maticks all the World over, and denied Communion in " all Churches ". If then the particular Churches of *France* and *Holland*, are True Churches, and not Schiſmatical, it is a plain Caſe the Church of *England* cannot be Catholick, becauſe ſhe has broken Communion with them.

Def. of Dr. *Stillingfl.* Unreaſ. of Separ. *p.* 247.

The ſame Learned Gentleman, diſcourſing of Catholick Union, tells us, " *It is not ſuffi-* " *cient to Chriſtian Union, that the Chriſtians* " *of one Nation or one Congregation, are united among them-* " *ſelves, unleſs they be united to the Catholick Church*; for " if there be but one Church, *a whole Nation may be* " *ſchiſmatical, as well as ſingle Perſons*; and there can be " nothing objected againſt this, without denying the very " Notion of a Catholick Church, and aſſerting that " Chriſt has not one, but twenty or a hundred ſeveral

Ibid. *p.* 139.

" Bodies, according to the number of various Sects " and Parties of Chriſtians." And a few Pages afterward, having cited a Paſſage from *Cyprian*,

p. 143. " he adds; " From whence it appears, that " it was St. *Cyprian*'s Judgment, (as indeed " it was the receiv'd Opinion of that Age of the Church, " and of ſeveral Ages after, and never queſtion'd till this " laſt Age of New Lights) that it was as *impoſſible for a* " *particular Church to retain the Nature and Privileges, and* " *ſaving Vertue and Graces of a Church, in a State of Sepa-* " *ration from the Catholick Church*, as it is for the Beams of " the Sun to give Light, when they are cut off from the " Body of the Sun, or for a River to be repleniſh'd with " Waters, when it has no communication with the Foun- " tain, or for a Branch to flouriſh, when it is broke off " from the Tree."

There are many other Remarkable Paſſages in the ſame Book to this purpoſe, but at preſent I ſhall

page 166. add but one more. " A right to Chriſtian " communion, ſignified a Right to be ad- " mitted to the Society of Chriſtians" [i. e. *if I underſtand him, of Chriſtians in general, and all the World over*] " and " to joyn with them in all the Parts and Offices, whether " of a Religious or a Civil Converſation, which is briefly " comprehended by *Tertullian*, in three Things: *Commu-* " *nicatio pacis, appellatio fraternitatis, & conteſſeratio Ho-* " *ſpitalitatis.* De præſcript. *cap.* 20. in admitting them " to the Peace of the Church, in calling them Brethren, " and in the mutual Offices of Hoſpitality." But how do they admit theſe Foreign Churches to the Peace of the Church, or how do they own them as Brethren, when they ſet ſuch a brand upon them, by declaring them incapable of all Places of Profit or Truſt, unleſs they will abſolutely forſake their own Communion, and when they puniſh thoſe of their own Church, if they are occaſionally preſent at their Worſhip? But however it be as to thoſe two things, I am ſure very little regard is ſhewn by the Church to the third, *the mutual Offices of Hoſpitality.*

Conſonant

Conſonant to this are the things he Advances in another Piece, wrote concerning Church-Communion. As particularly where he makes thoſe to be ſeparate Churches, and by Conſequence on one Side or other Schiſmatical, *which divide from the Communion of any Church from any diſlike of its Doctrine, Government, or Worſhip.* And certainly the Reaſon of this new Diviſion is a diſlike of theſe very things in thoſe Churches. For if it were a diſlike of Foreigners in General, why are they not all (as well they who do, as they who do not Worſhip God by the *Engliſh Liturgy*) incapacitated for bearing Offices? *Reſolu. of ſome Caſe. p.* 22.

Again, he tells us, *Thoſe are ſeparate Churches who do not own each others Members as their own.* And no Man can now be ſo Senſeleſs as to think, the Church of *England* owns the Members of theſe Churches as her own, or that ſhe deſires her Members ſhould be own'd by thoſe Churches as their own, ſince She ſo ſeverely puniſhes the holding Communion with them. Again, in his *Defence of that Treatiſe*, he expreſly conſiders the Caſe of thoſe Foreign Churches. "If any "Foreign Church (*ſays he*) among us, which "by Royal Favour is allow'd the obſervati- "on of their own Diſcipline and Rules of "Worſhip, renounce Communion with the Church of "*England*, or communicate with our Separatiſts, She is "Schiſmatical her ſelf, as the Proteſtant Churches in "*France*, *Geneva*, or *Holland* would be, ſhould they do the "like." To turn the Tables, I only deſire it may be allow'd on the other hand; that if the Church of *England* renounces Communion with the Churches of *France*, *Geneva*, or *Holland*, or communicates with our Separatiſts in *Scotland*, She muſt be her ſelf Schiſmatical. A little after he thus goes on: "A bare variety of Rites and Ce- "remonies makes no Schiſm between Churches; our "Church pretends not to give Laws to other Churches "in ſuch Matters, but leaves them to their Liberty, as "ſhe takes her own, and why an Eccleſiaſtical Colony "may not for great Reaſons be tranſplanted into ano- "ther Church, as well as a Civil Colony into another "King- *Ibid. p.* 23. *Letter to* Anon. *page* 13.

" Kingdom, *while they live in Communion with each other*, " I cannot tell." Still you ſee, Sir, he ſuppoſes them *to live in Communion with Each other*, which now is not the Caſe of the Church of *England* and thoſe Foreign Colonies; and conſequently either they or the Church of *England*, according to his Principles, muſt be Schiſmaticks, and ſo no part of the Catholick Church. Now, ſince in former Times this Author acknowledg'd both to belong to the Catholick Church, *viz.* while they held communion with each other, I leave it to you, or any reaſonable Man in the World to judge, which muſt be Schiſmatical, and no part of the Catholick Church, now a ſtop is put to that communion; whether thoſe Foreign Churches, which continue juſt as they were, or the Church of *England*, who in a Pet, and without any Provocation, has renounc'd communion with them. Now if the Church of *England* be found Schiſmatical in this Matter, as without doubt ſhe will be by all impartial Judges, then according to theſe Mens Principles, as we have ſeen before, no Man can belong to the Catholick Church who continues in her communion.

I ſhall now add another Learn'd Doctor of the Church of *England*, and that is Doctor *Scot*, who has with much Pains argued this Matter. The Teſtimony I ſhall cite may be found in his *Chriſtian Life*, Part 2. Vol. 2. being that *Volume* which is concerning the Mediator, which abating ſome weak Things concerning Church-Government, is a very excellent one. Thus then he Diſcourſes:

Page 298. " The Church is one univerſal Society to all Chriſtian People, diſtributed into " particular Churches [holding communion " with each other.] By holding communion with each " other, I mean, owning each other as parts of the ſame " Body, and admitting each others Members, as occaſion " ſerves, into actual communion with them in all their " Religious Offices.——All the communion which they " are oblig'd to, as they are ſimilar Parts and Diſtributi- " ons of the Catholick Church, is, that they ſhould not " divide into ſeparate Churches, ſo as to exclude each " others Members from communicating in each others

" Wor-

" Worſhip, whenever they have occaſion to Travel from " one Church to another. For ſo long as there is no Rup- " ture between diſtant Churches, no *declar'd diſowning of* " *each other*, no expreſs refuſal of any Act of Communion " to each others Members, they may be truly ſaid to " maintain all neceſſary Communion with each other. " And that this communion is *abſolutely neceſſary* between " all thoſe particular Churches, into which the Catholick " Church is diſtributed, will evidently appear from theſe " Four Conſiderations. *Firſt*, That by Baptiſm all Chri- " ſtian People are made Members of the Catholick Church, " and by being made Members of it, they are all oblig'd " to communicate with it. ——*Secondly*, It is farther " to be conſider'd, that the Catholick Church being all " diſtributed into particular Churches, we can no other- " wiſe communicate with it, than by communicating with " ſome particular Church. ——But then *Thirdly*, It is " alſo to be conſider'd, that as we cannot communicate " with the Univerſal Church, without communicating " with ſome particular one, *ſo neither do we communicate* " *with the Univerſal Church by communicating with any par-* " *ticular one, unleſs that particular one be in communion* " *with the Church Univerſal.* For If I cannot communicate " with the whole without being in communion with ſome " part of the whole, *it is impoſſible I ſhould communicate* " *with the whole, unleſs I communicate with ſome part that* " *is in communion with the whole.* It is as poſſible for a " Finger to communicate with a Body by being joyn'd to " an Arm that is ſeparated from the Body, as it is for a " Chriſtian to communicate with the Church Catholick " by being joyn'd to a Church that is ſeparate from the " Church Catholick. But then *Fourthly*, and Laſtly, *There* " *is no particular Church can be in commnnion with the Ca-* " *tholick, that ſeparates itſelf from the communion of any* " *particular Church that is in communion with the Catholick.* " For they who ſeparate from any part of any whole, muſt " neceſſarily ſeparate from the whole, becauſe the whole " is nothing but all the Parts together, and it is a Contra- " diction to ſay, that they who are ſeparated from any " one Part are yet united to All. *How then is it poſſible*

" *for*

" *for any Church to ſeparate it ſelf from the communion of*
" *any other Church, which is a true Part of the Church Ca-*
" *tholick, without ſeparating it ſelf from the communion of*
" *the Church Catholick it ſelf?* Since the Church Catholick
" is nothing but a Collection of all true Churches; and
" to be at the ſame time united to all true Churches, and
" ſeparated from one true Church, is the ſame Abſurdity
" as to be ſeparated from all true Churches, and yet uni-
" ted to one. In ſhort, the Catholick Church is one, by
" the communion of all its Parts, and therefore *they who*
" *break communion with any one part, muſt neceſſarily diſ-*
" *unite themſelves from the whole.* For when two Churches
" ſeparate from one another, it muſt be, either be-
" cauſe *the one requires ſuch terms of Communion as are not*
" *Catholick, or becauſe the other refuſes ſuch as are.*" [This is a noble Paſſage, and we have nothing more to do in the preſent Caſe, than to conſider what that term is upon which the communion of theſe Churches is broken, now that is the Worſhipping God according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*, which I hope there are none even of our higheſt Church-men will ſay is a term of Catholick communion. But hear what follows,]
" *Now that Church which requires Sinful or Un-catholick*
" *terms of Communion, doth hereby exclude not only one but*
" *all parts of the Catholick Church from its communion*, be-
" cauſe they are all equally oblig'd not to communicate
" with any Church upon Sinful terms of communion, *and*
" *that Church which excludes all parts of the Catholick*
" *Church from its communion, muſt in ſo doing ſeparate it-*
" *ſelf from the communion of the Catholick Church.* And
" ſo on the other hand, *that Church which refuſes the com-*
" *munion of any other Church upon Lawful and Catholick*
" *terms, doth thereby ſeparate itſelf from communion of all*
" *parts of the Church Catholick*, becauſe it ſeparates from a
" part that is in communion with all the parts of it; for
" *that Church which may be lawfully communicated with, is*
" *in communion with all other Churches, that are in commu-*
" *nion with the Catholick Church; and therefore that Church*
" *which ſeparates from its communion, cannot be in the num-*
" *ber of thoſe Churches that are in communion with the Ca-*

" *tholick*

" *tholick Church; and how then can this Separating Church*
" *be in the commuion of the Catholick Church, when it is*
" *out of the communion of any one of thoſe Churches, of*
" *which the Catholick Church conſiſts?* All thoſe parti-
" cular Churches therefore into which the Catholick
" Church is diſtributed, muſt be in Communion with
" each other, otherwiſe they are ſo far from being di-
" ſtributions of the Catholick Church, that they are
" only ſo many Schiſms and Diviſions from it. For if
" every Chriſtian is oblig'd by his Baptiſm to commu-
" nicate with the Catholick Church, and if he can no
" otherwiſe communicate with it than by communi-
" cating with ſome particular Church, which is in
" communion with the Church Catholick; and laſtly,
" if *no particular Church can be in communion with the*
" *Church Catholick, which is not in communion with all*
" *the Churches of which the Church Catholick conſiſts*;
" then it is abſolutely neceſſary that all thoſe Churches
" into which the Church Catholick is diſtributed,
" ſhould maintain a Catholick Communion with one
" another."

This Paſſage is ſo very full and home to my purpoſe, that I cannot but commend to you the attentive review of it, and I think I need not add any more. Both theſe Doctors were Men who had written in the Controverſy againſt the Diſſenters, and were of great Reputation in the Church; ſo that I think in the Mouth of two ſuch Witneſſes as theſe my Aſſertion is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed.

You will Pardon me, Sir, if before I leave this, I take Notice to you of the notorious Partiality of theſe Writers, and of the ſly Art and Management, with which they accommodated their Principles and Doctrines to the Time in which they wrote, and to the Uſages of their own Church. You muſt have obſerv'd how they all along lay the ſtreſs of Catholick Communion upon the ſeveral Churches receiving each others Members as their own: they give not the leaſt hint of what a Man would reaſonably expect, that for the maintaining this

Catholick communion, there ſhould be likewiſe a receiving each others Miniſters as their own. For indeed the not receiving each others Miniſters is vertually a denying the validity of their Adminiſtrations, and ſo a diſowning of all in Communion with them, as no Members of the Catholick Church. For ſince theſe Gentlemen with the ancient Writers, reckon Miniſters eſſential to a Church, how can they receive Perſons as actual Members of the Church, whoſe Miniſters they receive not as true Miniſters of the Church; But had they taken notice of this, they muſt have ſpoil'd all; becauſe tho' they willingly receiv'd the Members of the Foreign Churches, as they did the Diſſenters alſo, yet their Miniſters they would not receive as ſuch, or ſuffer them (however qualified) to Officiate as ſuch in the Church of *England*, unleſs they would accept of a new Ordination from Her. Nor can this be ſaid to be done by way of confirming their former Ordination, becauſe they ſhould then have immediately Ordain'd them what they were before, *Presbyters*; whereas now they firſt ordain them Deacons, who are of a lower Order than Presbyters; and conſequently they declare they did not look upon them to have been Presbyters before. Hence to fit their Principles and Arguments to their own Practices, they ſo conſtantly in their account of Catholick Communion left out all mention of this Matter, and reſolved to put it wholly upon the receiving one anothers Members. But who can enough adore the wiſe Providence of God, who has now ſuffered them to take ſuch a courſe as has quite turn'd even this their defective and partial Account of the Matter ſo directly againſt themſelves? For if there be any Truth in what they ſay, they have wretchedly miſs'd their Blow at us (whom they principally aim'd at in ſuch kind of Diſcourſes) and have lop'd off themſelves inſtead of us, from the Catholick Church. For I have made it plain, they do not now receive ſo much as the Members of the Catholick Church as their own, and therefore according

to

to their own Principles muſt be ſever'd from it; whereas, we on the other hand always have, and ſtill do receive all their Members and Miniſters as our own.

I foreſee only two Objections, which may be made againſt what I have ſaid; and tho' I do not think them very material, yet that I may make every thing as clear as poſſible, I ſhall briefly take notice of them.

Object. 1. Some may perhaps Object, that this is only the Doctrine of ſome particular Doctors, who tho' they were of great Name, yet were not authoriz'd to declare the Senſe of the Church, and that therefore it is not fair to repreſent this as the Church's Doctrine.

To which I anſwer; That ſhould I grant the whole of this Objection, yet I have prov'd the Poſition I advanc'd. But I add farther; this has been the general Doctrine, greedily Embrac'd, diligently Copy'd out by the Clergy, and induſtriouſly Diſpers'd and Propagated; and therefore had I charg'd it on the Church, I had not been much to blame. This Doctrine, which has been ſo prevailing, is either True or Falſe. If it be True, then the Church of *England* is no part of the Catholick Church, and I have gain'd the Point I deſigned to prove, that it is your Duty, Sir, to forſake her Communion. If the Doctrine is Falſe, how finely have you Gentlemen of the Laity been chous'd in the mean while! Since all the Harangues of the Clergy muſt now appear to be nothing but *Cant and Jargon*; and it is now high time for you to joyn with us, ſince you may perceive you were before affrighted from us only by Theological *Scare-crows*. And beſides, if this Doctrine be Falſe, you may perceive the Clergy have double Work cut out for them. 1. To confute theſe old Principles and Doctrines they have advanc'd, that they *may* be able to ſave to themſelves the Rights of Catholick Chriſtians. 2. They muſt find out ſome New Topicks, by which they may charge up-

on us a Schiſm from the Catholick Church, for theſe Old ones (what pity it is!) are quite out of Date, and will ſerve no longer. And when they ſhall have diſcharg'd both theſe to your ſatisfaction, you may return to them again; and till then I think you are bound to leave them.

2. It may be objected that all this Argument runs upon an Act of Parliament, and not of Convocation; that it is therefore an Act of the State and not of the Church; and conſequently it is unreaſonable to charge this breach of Catholick Communion upon the Church of *England*.

To this I Anſwer; as the Church ows her Conſtitution to the State, the Laws of the State, whereby her Communion is regulated, are as much Church-Laws as any other. There are many other things in the Church of *England*, which have no other Eſtabliſhment; and it is impoſſible for any Man to know what the Church of *England* is, by barely examining her Liturgy, Articles, Homilies, Canons, *&c.* without ſearching into Acts of Parliament. If the Church ſubmits to be under the Direction of the State, all the Laws of the State which relate to her eſtabliſh'd Polity, muſt be Church-Laws. Beſides, as I have already prov'd, there muſt now be a renouncing Communion with the Foreign Churches ſomewhere in the Church of *England*; but according to the Doctrine which I have been treating of, the Renouncers are Schiſmaticks, and ſo are all that are in Communion with them. So that I muſt needs ſay, that Doctrine is moſt admirably contriv'd, and I hope, the Providence of God deſign'd it to be of ſpecial Service at this Time.

Thus, Sir, I have finiſhed the Task you were pleaſed to ſet me; I would now break off, were it not that I am deſirous you ſhould ſee, I have more Reaſons for what I urge than barely the Authority of theſe Gentlemen I have mention'd, and therefore with your leave, I will yet farther preſs upon you your Duty.

And

And in the firſt place I cannot Omit putting you in Mind of our Creed. I doubt not as you were Baptiz'd into the belief of it, aud have ſince ſo frequently repeated it in your Worſhip, you will pay a deference to what ever you find in it, and will chuſe to forſake the communion you have been in hitherto, rather than depart from any one Article of the Faith you have ſo often, and I doubt not, very ſeriouſly Profeſs'd. Now there are no leſs than two Articles of the Creed, which relate to this very Matter, and oblige you to join readily with any true part of the Church of Chriſt in their Worſhip, and to forſake thoſe who break the communion and Peace of the Church. They are thoſe wherein you profeſs to believe *the holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.* I ſhall rather chuſe to give you that part of the Senſe of them, which is to my purpoſe, in the Words of Dr. *Barrow*, whom you ſo highly and deſervedly value, than in my own; leaſt you ſhould ſuſpect me, as forcing an Interpretation upon them, out of a partial Affection to my own Opinion.

In his Diſcourſe then upon that Article of the Creed; *the holy Catholick Church*, he ſays:

" In relation to which Society, theſe are *Vol. 2. p. 509.*
" the Duties which we here profeſs our-
" ſelves oblig'd to, and in effect promiſe to obſerve.
" ——That we are bound to communicate with all
" good Chriſtians, and all Societies ſincerely profeſſing
" Faith, Charity and Obedience to our Lord; ſo as to
" join with them, as occaſion ſhall be, in all Offices of
" Piety; to maintain good Correſpondence and Con-
" cord with them." Now Sir, I hope theſe Foreign Churches are truly ſuch Chriſtians and ſuch Societies; and conſequently this Act forbids that, which Chriſtians in their Creed profeſs themſelves bound and oblig'd to. Another thing which he tells us this obliges us to, is,

" to diſavow and ſhun all Factious Combinations what-
" ever, of Perſons corrupting the Truth of Chriſtian
" Doctrine, or diſturbing the Peace of the Church, or

" of

" of any part of it." And whether this new proceeding be a diſturbing the Peace of the Church, is not hard to determine.

Upon the other Article, *the Communion of Saints*, he ſays: " The meaning of the " Words is, as I take it, that all the " Saints, (that is all Chriſtians, either in legal pre- " ſumption, or according to real Diſpoſition of Heart, " ſuch) do in effect, or ſhould according to Obligation, " communicate, partake, join together, conſent, and " agree in what concerneth Saints, or Members of the " holy Catholick Church; in believing and acknow- " ledging the ſame Heavenly Truth, in performance " of Devotions, or Offices of Piety with, and for one " another, in Charitable good Will, and Affection to- " ward one another." But is it poſſible to comply with the Church, according to the late Act, conſiſtently with ſuch a Profeſſion? Or can you be eaſy to profeſs one thing in the preſence of God, and be ſubject to any humane Law, which ſhall make you practiſe quite contrary?

Ibid. p. 511.

But tho' I have urg'd the Creed, as I know you, Sir, deſervedly pay a great Regard to it; yet I have a greater Authority, even that of the Holy Scriptures, to enforce upon you the ſame thing. And that I may not be tedious, I will urge but one place of Scripture, which I take to be very plain and full to my purpoſe. Rom. xvi. 16, 17. *Now I beſeech you Brethren, mark them which cauſe Diviſions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own Belly; and by good Words and fair Speeches deceive the Hearts of the ſimple.* You are well ſatisfied, this Act is likely to give Offence to the Church of God throughout the World. You could not refrain from complaining on that Head. Doubtleſs this is contrary to that Doctrine which was to be learn'd of the Apoſtle, who taught Chriſtians, *to give none offence, neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God,*

1 Cor.

1 Cor. x. 32. But by this means *Diviſions* as well as *Offences*, are caus'd. I have been always convinc'd, our Eccleſiaſtical Diviſions at home were intirely caus'd by the Impoſitions of our Adverſaries. And a Man muſt be now Blind, who does not ſee who are the cauſers of Diviſions; ſince the manifeſt deſign of this Act is, to widen the diſtance and ſeparation between us as much as poſſible. You know, Sir, we have always Profeſs'd ourſelves deſirous of the Peace of the Church, and have never been backward to do any thing that lay in our power to promote it. Formerly all Counſels of Peace were rejected thro' the influence which a Popiſh Prince had upon our Adverſaries, who in their Courtſhip to him, Sacrificed the Peace of the Church for his Favour. Afterwards, when a kind Providence had deliver'd them from that Temptation, and put a fair opportunity into their hands, their implacable hatred of *Peace* and *Us* made them ſcorn all Attempts for a Reconciliation, with a *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.* I can aſſure you, it has been no ſmall Satisfaction to me, in the midſt of our furious Contentions, to ſee I am on that ſide, which may ſay, *Our Soul has long dwelt with them that hate Peace, We are for Peace, but when we ſpeak, they are for War*, Pſal. cxx. 6, 7.

But it is a Satisfaction to ſee it made apparent to the whole World, that the ſame kind of Men who have cauſed Diviſions between themſelves and us, are for cauſing Diviſions between themſelves and the whole Church of Chriſt upon the Earth. I always thought it to be a very great Sin *they* were guilty of, who caus'd our former Diviſions; but I muſt own, I look upon it a much greater, openly and plainly to diſown and ſeparate from the communion of the Catholick Church. Nay, I am apt to think, this Act may poſſibly have a farther influence to cauſe Diviſions among thoſe Churches of Foreigners which are ſettled among us. There are ſome of them who have ſubmitted to the Diſcipline and Worſhip of the Church of *England*, others have kept to their own, which did not break their

their Communion, or make them ſhy of one another; but I fear this will make a conſiderable alteration in their Caſe, and make one part of them at leaſt ſtand at a greater diſtance from the other. Thus far then, I think thoſe Words exactly ſuit our preſent Caſe: Our Adverſaries are they who *cauſe Diviſions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine which Chriſtians learnt of the Apoſtles* The next Words fully agree to them alſo: *For they that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own Belly.* They cannot in this be the Servants of Chriſt, there being nothing in the World more oppoſite to his Command or his Intereſt, than the cauſing Diviſions or Offences. Whether they *ſerve their own Belly*, muſt be determin'd by ſtating to whom they appropriate the Places of Profit and Truſt, which they turn ſo many out of. In general, I fear the *Belly*, in the Senſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks of it, has been the ſource from whence our Diviſions firſt ſprang, and for which they have been ever ſince fed and increas'd. Now, what is the Duty of Chriſtians with reference to ſuch cauſers of Diviſions and Offences, whether they be particular Perſons or Communions? They are to *mark them*, which ſhames the indifference of the generality of our *Engliſh* Laity, who ſupinely take things upon truſt, and never think themſelves concern'd with any Attention and Seriouſneſs to inquire, who are the true Cauſes of our Diviſions; they think let the Clergy be never ſo much to blame in ſubmitting to the Terms which divide us, they are not themſelves concern'd in them. On the contrary, the Apoſtle's Direction teaches us, that in caſe of Diviſions, Chriſtians ſhould endeavour to know the right of Matters, and upon whom the Cauſe and Fault of the Diviſions is chargeable; and when the Perſons are diſcover'd, then they are to be AVOIDED. If this Rule of the Apoſtle's were but generally obſerv'd, I can eaſily tell, what our Adverſaries Cauſe would ſoon come to. My Requeſt therefore to you, Sir, is, That you would in the fear of God ſearch out the Dividers, that you may ſet ſuch a Mark

Mark upon them as they deſerve, and when you have done ſo, in God's Name avoid them, on which ever Side they ſhould happen to be. Uſe Reaſon and Conſcience in the Search, and be not among the *Simple, whoſe Hearts are deceiv'd by the good Words and fair Speeches* (the Allurements and Offers) *of ſuch Dividers.*

If the Apoſtle had not thus determined the Matter, one would think Prudence might teach a Chriſtian, in the preſent Caſe, to come to the ſame Determination. Doubtleſs the ready way to promote Religion, is to mark and avoid ſuch Dividers. The great Struggle, which has been continued ſo long in this Nation, has been for a Reformation. That a Reformation is wanted, needs no proof, it being acknowledg'd in ſome Things by the ſoureſt Advocates of the Eſtabliſh'd Conſtitution. There has been a Party in the Church, diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt by their Piety, and their being on the Low-ſide, who have been earneſtly deſiring and ſeeking the ſame thing with us, and have thought they might do more to promote the Deſign by keeping in the Church, than we could by being out of it. But may it not now appear, that no ſuch thing is to be expected, and that there is an abſolute neceſſity of their leaving the Church, as ever they would attain their Deſires? Nay, have not their own Hopes of Reformation of Manners, and of the Conſtitution been quaſh'd together? Is not the Fence againſt Reformation now made almoſt as ſtrong as poſſible? Or if any thing be wanting, is there not a likelyhood of its being ſhortly added to compleat and finiſh it? Other People, who have farther inſight into the diſpoſition of the Nation, may be better able to form a Judgment, whether our Landed Intereſt is more likely to Promote a Reformation, than the Trade and Money-Intereſt, (which are now turned out from ſerving for Corporations, as they uſed to do according to our old Conſtitution) and therefore I will not meddle with that. But it is Evident, a great part of that Intereſt, which us'd to joyn with the Low-

Church, is depriv'd of the Influence it formerly had. And as the Low-Church, by the loſs of the Intereſt of their Friends, will be leſs able to Act than formerly; ſo it is not unlikely that when their turn comes, the Places they yet hold may be made as uneaſy to them by ſome New Teſts, as they are by the late Act to the Diſſenters. Is not every Step the Church of *England* takes a going further from you, and do not your hopes keep pace with them in forſaking you? I ſay every Step the *Church of England* takes; for I am willing to allow them that Name they are ſo fond of appropriating to themſelves, and which you have been Challenging, and I ſhall be heartily glad to ſee that one Party alone left in the Church. Now, Sir, do's not Prudence direct you, that ſince no good is to be done by your joyning with them, you ſhould wholly leave them, and come over to us? You may fancy, you ſhall be able to do Service by keeping in: But will you pleaſe to conſider how little, if any, it muſt be, when you ſhall be ſo Exceſſively over-match'd and out-number'd; and how ſhort liv'd your Service is like to be? Will you pleaſe to conſider, whether you are not likely to do more Service by coming off? Do you not ſee the Church values her ſelf upon her Numbers? And tho' they would be glad to cruſh the Power and Influence of thoſe of your Principles, yet don't you believe they would be heartily ſorry to ſee you forſake their Communion? If you, and ſome other eminent Perſons of your Side, ſhould now ſhew a good Example, may it not reaſonably be hop'd, many others would follow it? And would not this be the moſt likely way to humble our Zealots, or quite confound their Schemes? I know it is a hard Point I am ſtriving to gain. I am recommending to you the choice of preſent Trouble and Affliction. But as you uſed to own us as Brethren, I hope the late Act of Parliament has been able to make no more alteration in your Judgment of us, than it has in our true Character. I put it therefore to your Conſcience, Whom would you chuſe rather at laſt to

be

be found ranked with? Us, or the High-flyers? I am miſtaken in you, if you dare ſay the latter. If you ſay the former, remember it will enhance the nobleneſs of your Choice, if *you chuſe rather to* Heb. xi. 25. *ſuffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon.* When I conſider the Providence of God, that preſides over theſe, and all other Affairs, I cannot but be ready to conclude, that God by permitting Men to drive Things on ſo far, and to widen the Diſtance between themſelves and the Catholick Church, is bringing about ſome Difference and Diſtinction which he himſelf deſigns to make. But however that be, God ſeems to direct us to the like Reſolution with that mention'd by the Prophet: *We would have* Jerem. Li. 9. *healed Babylon, and ſhe is not healed, FORSAKE HER.* I would not by this be underſtood, to call the Church of *England Babylon*, tho' I wiſh ſhe were more free from all reſemblance to that *Babylon* deſcrib'd in the *Revelations*, whoſe two famous and diſtinguiſhing Characters ſeem to be Idolatry and Perſecution. The latter of theſe is perhaps in ſome Reſpects the worſt of the two; I the rather think ſo, becauſe it really carries in it a good degree of the former. For he that Perſecutes, ſets himſelf up in the place of God, and challenges to himſelf that Authority over, and that Reſpect from the Conſciences of Men, which belongs to God only.

I have already exceeded the Bounds I at firſt ſet my ſelf, and therefore ſhall not enter upon an Enquiry, whether the late Act is chargeable with this enormous Impiety. Nor indeed need I. For I could eaſily perceive by your Diſcourſe, you had fully conſidered, and come to an entire Satisfaction about that Point. I ſhall therefore only add, that you and others may do as you pleaſe: But for my own part, as this Act would have made me a Diſſenter, had I been a Churchman before; ſo I am fully reſolved, whenever any Communion turn Perſecutors, by the Grace of God

I will ſay of them, as *Jacob* of *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. xlix. 5, 6. *Inſtruments of Cruelty are in their Habitations. O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret; unto their Aſſembly, mine Honour be not thou united.*

I am,

March the 19th, $17\frac{11}{11}$.

SIR,

Your very Obliged

and Reſpectful Friend

and Servant.

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